

In The Claims:**Claims 1-46 (canceled)**

47. (currently amended) A method of connecting a terminal to a host system on a communications network, the terminal including a communications interface, a display, a storage device and an input device, the method comprising

activating a message viewer on the display of the terminal, the message viewer for controlling communications and for receiving and displaying images on the terminal, the message viewer having a first version identifier

the message viewer ~~establishing~~ causing a connection with the host system ~~to be~~ established through the communications interface on a communication line

the message viewer transmitting a user ID and a password for a user of the terminal to the host system through the ~~communication~~ communications line

the message viewer receiving an approval from the host system for the terminal to access the communications network through the ~~communication~~ communications line

the message viewer transmitting the first version identifier to the host system through the ~~communication~~ communications line

the message viewer receiving an upgraded version of the message viewer through the communication line

the message viewer storing the upgraded version of the message viewer in the storage device

the message viewer activating the upgraded version of the message viewer on the terminal, whereby the upgraded version of the message viewer assumes control of the communication and image display from the message viewer having the first version identifier.

48. (previously presented) The method of connecting a terminal to a host system of claim 47 wherein the message viewer comprises a client program.

49. (previously presented) The method of connecting a terminal to a host system of claim 47 wherein the terminal further includes an operating system having associated therewith an operating system type, the method further comprising the message viewer transmitting the operating system type to the host system before receiving the upgraded version of the message

viewer.

50. (previously presented) The method of connecting a terminal to a host system of claim 47 further comprising displaying a message on the display that the upgraded version of the message viewer has been received, after receiving the upgraded version of the message viewer.

51. (previously presented) The method of connecting a terminal to a host system of claim 47 further comprising, before activating the upgraded version of the message viewer

the message viewer displaying a message on the display that the upgraded version of the message viewer is available

the message viewer receiving an upgrade response input from the user through the input device of the terminal indicating that the user wishes to receive the upgraded version of the computer program.

52. (previously presented) The method of connecting a terminal to a host system of claim 47 further comprising, before receiving the upgraded version of the message viewer

the message viewer receiving a message from the host system that the upgraded version of the message viewer is available

the message viewer displaying a message on the display that the upgraded version of the message viewer is available

the message viewer receiving an upgrade response input from the user through the input device of the terminal indicating that the user wishes to receive the upgraded version of the message viewer.

53. (currently amended) A recording medium storing a message viewer program comprising program code to be read by a terminal communicating with a host system through a ~~communication~~ ~~communications~~ line; the terminal including a communications interface, a display[[.]], a storage device and an input device; the message viewer for controlling communications and for receiving and displaying images on the terminal; the message viewer having a first version identifier; the program code comprising instructions for causing the terminal to

~~establish~~ cause a connection with the host system ~~to be established~~ through the communications interface on the communication line

transmit a user ID and a password for a user of the terminal to the host system through the ~~communication~~ ~~communications~~ line

receive an approval from the host system for the terminal to access the network through the communication communications line

transmit the version identifier to the host system through the communication communications line

receive an upgraded version of the message viewer through the communication line

store the upgraded version of the message viewer in the storage device

activate the upgraded version of the message viewer on the display of the terminal, whereby the upgraded version of the message viewer assumes control of the communication and image display from the message viewer having the first version identifier.

54. (previously presented) The recording medium storing a message viewer program comprising program code to be read by a terminal communicating with a host system through a communications network of claim 53, wherein the message viewer comprises a client program.

55. (previously presented) The recording medium storing a message viewer program comprising program code to be read by a terminal communicating with a host system through a communications network of claim 53, wherein the terminal further includes an operating system having associated therewith an operating system type, the program code further comprising instructions for causing the terminal to, before receiving the upgraded version of the message viewer, transmit the operating system type to the host system.

56. (previously presented) The recording medium storing a message viewer program comprising program code to be read by a terminal communicating with a host system through a communications network of claim 53, the program code further comprising instructions for causing the terminal to, after receiving the upgraded version of the message viewer, display a message on the display that the upgraded version of the message viewer has been received.

57. (previously presented) The recording medium storing a message viewer program comprising program code to be read by a terminal communicating with a host system through a communications network of claim 53, the program code further comprising instructions for causing the terminal to, before activating the upgraded version of the message viewer

display a message on the display that the upgraded version of the message viewer is available

receive an upgrade response input from the user through the input device of the terminal indicating that the user wishes to receive the upgraded version of the computer program.

58. (previously presented) The recording medium storing a message viewer program comprising program code to be read by a terminal communicating with a host system through a communications network of claim 53, the program code further comprising instructions for causing the terminal to, before receiving the upgraded version of the message viewer

receive a message from the host system that the upgraded version of the message viewer is available

display a message on the display that the upgraded version of the message viewer is available

receive an upgrade response input from the user through the input device of the terminal indicating that the user wishes to receive the upgraded version of the message viewer.

59. (currently amended) A terminal for connecting to a host system on a communications network, the terminal comprising

a communications interface

a display

a storage device

an input device

means for activating a message viewer on the display of the terminal, the message viewer for controlling communications and for receiving and displaying images on the terminal, the message viewer having a first version identifier

means for establishing causing a connection with the host system to be established through the communications interface on a communication line

means for transmitting a user ID and a password for a user of the terminal to the host system through the communication communications line

means for receiving an approval from the host system for the terminal to access the network through the communication communications line

means for transmitting the version identifier to the host system through the communication communications line

means for receiving an upgraded version of the message viewer through the communication line

means for storing the upgraded version of the message viewer in the storage device

means for activating the upgraded version of the message viewer on the display of the

terminal, whereby the upgraded version of the message viewer assumes control of the communication and image display from the message viewer having the first version identifier.

60. (previously presented) The terminal for connecting to a host system on a communications network of claim 59, wherein the message viewer comprises a client program.

61. (previously presented) The terminal for connecting to a host system on a communications network of claim 59, wherein the terminal further includes

an operating system having associated therewith an operating system type

means for, before receiving the upgraded version of the message viewer, transmitting the operating system type to the host system.

62. (previously presented) The terminal for connecting to a host system on a communications network of claim 59 further comprising means for displaying a message on the display that the upgraded version of the message viewer has been received after receiving the upgraded version of the message viewer.

63. (previously presented) The terminal for connecting to a host system on a communications network of claim 59 further comprising

means for displaying a message on the display that the upgraded version of the message viewer is available before activating the upgraded version of the message viewer

means for receiving an upgrade response input from the user through the input device of the terminal indicating that the user wishes to receive the upgraded version of the computer program.

64. (previously presented) The terminal for connecting to a host system on a communications network of claim 59 further comprising

means for receiving a message from the host system that the upgraded version of the message viewer is available before receiving the upgraded version of the message viewer

means for displaying a message on the display that the upgraded version of the message viewer is available

means for receiving an upgrade response input from the user through the input device of the terminal indicating that the user wishes to receive the upgraded version of the message viewer.

65. (currently amended) A method of operating a host system to provide an upgraded message viewer to a terminal, the message viewer for controlling communications and for

receiving and displaying images on the terminal, the method comprising

~~establishing causing a connection with the terminal to be established through a~~
communications interface on a communication line

receiving a user ID and a password for a user of the terminal through the communications
transmitting an approval to the terminal for the terminal to access a network coupled to
the host system

receiving a first version identifier for a message viewer used on the terminal from the
terminal through the ~~communication~~ communications line

determining whether the first version identifier is most up to date

if the first version identifier is the most up to date, the method ends

if the first version identifier is not the most up to date, transmitting the upgraded message
viewer through the communication line to the terminal.

66. (previously presented) The method of operating a host system to provide an upgraded
message viewer to a terminal of claim 65, wherein the message viewer comprises a client
program.

67. (previously presented) The method of operating a host system to provide an upgraded
message viewer to a terminal of claim 65, wherein the terminal further includes an operating
system having associated therewith an operating system type, the method further comprising

storing plural versions of the upgraded message viewer according to operating system
type

receiving the operating system type from the terminal before transmitting the upgraded
message viewer

selecting the upgraded message viewer according to the operating system type of the
terminal.

68. (previously presented) The method of operating a host system to provide an upgraded
message viewer to a terminal of claim 65 further comprising, after determining that the first
version identifier is not the most up to date

transmitting a message to the terminal that the upgraded message viewer is available

determining whether there is a downloading request from the terminal in response to the
message

if downloading is not requested, then the method ends

if downloading is requested, then the upgraded message viewer is transmitted to the terminal.

69. (currently amended) A recording medium storing a computer program comprising program code to be read by a host system communicating with a terminal through a ~~communications~~ communication line; the message viewer having a first version identifier; the program code comprising instructions for causing the host system to

~~establish~~ cause a connection with the terminal ~~to be established~~ through a communications interface on the communication line

receive a user ID and a password for a user of the terminal through the ~~communication~~ communications line

transmit an approval to the terminal for the terminal to access a network coupled to the host system

receive a first version identifier for a message viewer used on the terminal from the terminal through the ~~communication~~ communications line, the message viewer for controlling communications and for receiving and displaying images on the terminal

determine whether the first version identifier is most up to date

transmit the upgraded message viewer through the communication line to the terminal if the first version identifier is not the most up to date.

70. (currently amended) The recording medium storing a computer program comprising program code to be read by a host system communicating with a terminal through a ~~communication~~ communications line of claim 69, wherein the message viewer comprises a client program.

71. (currently amended) The recording medium storing a computer program comprising program code to be read by a host system communicating with a terminal through a ~~communication~~ communications line of claim 69, wherein the terminal further includes an operating system having associated therewith an operating system type, and the host system stores plural versions of the upgraded message viewer according to operating system type, the program code further comprising instructions for causing the host system to

receive the operating system type from the terminal before transmitting the upgraded message viewer

select the upgraded message viewer according to the operating system type of the

terminal.

72. (currently amended) The recording medium storing a computer program comprising program code to be read by a host system communicating with a terminal through a ~~communication~~ communications line of claim 69 further comprising instructions for causing the host system to

after determining that the first version identifier is not the most up to date, transmit a message to the terminal that the upgraded message viewer is available

determine whether there is a downloading request from the terminal in response to the message

transmit the upgraded message viewer to the terminal if downloading is requested.

73. (currently amended) A host system for connecting to a terminal on a network, the host system comprising

a communications interface

a storage

means for ~~establishing~~ causing a connection with the terminal to be established through the a communications interface on a communication line

means for receiving a user ID and a password for a user of the terminal through the ~~communication~~ communications line

means for transmitting an approval to the terminal for the terminal to access a network coupled to the host system

means for receiving a first version identifier for a message viewer used on the terminal from the terminal through the ~~communication~~ communications line

means for determining whether the first version identifier is most up to date

means for transmitting the upgraded message viewer through the communication line to the terminal if the first version identifier is not the most up to date.

74. (previously presented) The host system for connecting to a terminal on a network of claim 73, wherein the message viewer comprises a client program.

75. (previously presented) The host system for connecting to a terminal on a network of claim 73, wherein the terminal further includes an operating system having associated therewith an operating system type, the host system further comprising

means for storing plural versions of the upgraded message viewer according to operating

system type

means for receiving the operating system type from the terminal before transmitting the upgraded message viewer

means for selecting the upgraded message viewer according to the operating system type of the terminal.

76. (previously presented) The host system for connecting to a terminal on a network of claim 73 further comprising,

means for transmitting a message to the terminal that the upgraded message viewer is available after determining that the first version identifier is not the most up to date

means for determining whether there is a downloading request from the terminal in response to the message

means for transmitting the upgraded message viewer to the terminal if downloading is requested.

77. (currently amended) A method of operating a host system to provide an upgraded message viewer to a terminal, the message viewer for controlling communications and for receiving and displaying images on the terminal, the method comprising

establishing causing a connection with the terminal to be established through a communications interface on a communication line

receiving a user ID and a password for a user of the terminal through the communication communications line

transmitting an approval to the terminal for the terminal to access a network coupled to the host system

determining a last communication time comprising a time when the terminal last communicated with the host system

determining a last upgrade time comprising a time when a message viewer on the terminal was last upgraded

determining an upgrade release time comprising a time when distribution began of the upgraded message viewer

comparing the last communication time and the last upgrade time to the upgrade release time

determining whether the last communication time and the last upgrade time are before the

upgrade release time

if the last communication time and the last upgrade time are before the upgrade release time, then transmitting the upgraded message viewer through the communication line to the terminal.

78. (previously presented) The method of operating a host system to provide an upgraded message viewer to a terminal of claim 77, wherein the message viewer comprises a client program.

79. (previously presented) The method of operating a host system to provide an upgraded message viewer to a terminal of claim 77, wherein the terminal further includes an operating system having associated therewith an operating system type, the method further comprising

storing plural versions of the upgraded message viewer according to operating system type

receiving the operating system type from the terminal before transmitting the upgraded message viewer

selecting the upgraded message viewer according to the operating system type of the terminal.

80. (currently amended) The method of operating a host system to provide an upgraded message viewer to a terminal of claim 77 further comprising, after determining whether the last communication time and the last upgrade time are before the upgrade release time, if the last communication time and the last upgrade time are before the upgrade release time

transmitting a message to the terminal that the upgraded message viewer is available

determining whether there is a downloading request from the terminal in response to the message

if downloading is not requested[[:]], then the method ends

transmitting the upgraded message viewer to the terminal if downloading is requested.

81. (currently amended) A recording medium storing a computer program comprising program code to be read by a host system communicating with a terminal through a communication communications line; the message viewer having a first version identifier; the program code comprising instructions for causing the host system to

~~establish~~ cause a connection with the terminal ~~to be established~~ through a communications interface on the a communication line

receiving a user ID and a password for a user of the terminal through the communication communications line

transmit an approval to the terminal for the terminal to access a network coupled to the host system

determine a last communication time comprising a time when the terminal last communicated with the host system

determine a last upgrade time comprising a time when a message viewer on the terminal was last upgraded

determine an upgrade release time comprising a time when distribution began of the upgraded message viewer

compare the last communication time and the last upgrade time to the upgrade release time

determine whether the last communication time and the last upgrade time are before the upgrade release time

transmit the upgraded message viewer through the communication line to the terminal if the last communication time and the last upgrade time are before the upgrade release time.

82. (currently amended) The recording medium storing a computer program comprising program code to be read by a host system communicating with a terminal through a communication communications line of claim 81, wherein the message viewer comprises a client program.

83. (currently amended) The recording medium storing a computer program comprising program code to be read by a host system communicating with a terminal through a communication communications line of claim 81, wherein the terminal further includes an operating system having associated therewith an operating system type, and the host system stores plural versions of the upgraded message viewer according to operating system type, the program code further comprising instructions for causing the host system to

receive the operating system type from the terminal before transmitting the upgraded message viewer

select the upgraded message viewer according to the operating system type of the terminal.

84. (currently amended) The recording medium storing a computer program comprising

program code to be read by a host system communicating with a terminal through a communication communications line of claim 81 further comprising instructions for causing the host system to

after determining that the first version identifier is not the most up to date, transmit a message to the terminal that the upgraded message viewer is available

determine whether there is a downloading request from the terminal in response to the message

transmit the upgraded message viewer to the terminal if downloading is requested.

85. (currently amended) A host system for connecting to a terminal on a network, the host system comprising

a communications interface

a storage

means for ~~establishing~~ causing a connection with the terminal ~~to be established~~ through ~~the~~ a communications interface on a communication line

means for receiving a user ID and a password for a user of the terminal through the communication communications line

means for transmitting an approval to the terminal for the terminal to access a network coupled to the host system

means for determining a last communication time comprising a time when the terminal last communicated with the host system

means for determining a last upgrade time comprising a time when a message viewer on the terminal was last upgraded

means for determining an upgrade release time comprising a time when distribution began of the upgraded message viewer

means for comparing the last communication time and the last upgrade time to the upgrade release time

means for determining whether the last communication time and the last upgrade time are before the upgrade release time

means for transmitting the upgraded message viewer through the communication line to the terminal if the last communication time and the last upgrade time are before the upgrade release time.

86. (previously presented) The host system for connecting to a terminal on a network of claim 85, wherein the message viewer comprises a client program.

87. (previously presented) The host system for connecting to a terminal on a network of claim 85, wherein the terminal further includes an operating system having associated therewith an operating system type, the host system further comprising

means for storing plural versions of the upgraded message viewer according to operating system type

means for receiving the operating system type from the terminal before transmitting the upgraded message viewer

means for selecting the upgraded message viewer according to the operating system type of the terminal.

88. (previously presented) The host system for connecting to a terminal on a network of claim 85 further comprising,

means for transmitting a message to the terminal that the upgraded message viewer is available after determining that the first version identifier is not the most up to date

means for determining whether there is a downloading request from the terminal in response to the message

means for transmitting the upgraded message viewer to the terminal if downloading is requested.